

OLD BALTIMORE

Before 'alzheimer's' or 'old timers' or whatever they call it kicks in, I wanted to get this down. When Junior and I were seven and six, we would wait until our father came home from work on payday. He could still work then. We would get our allowance of a nickel each. We would walk down fourteenth street, 'Newkirk Street' now, to a little store next to the fire department. For a nickel we could buy a bottle of Lord Calvert soda, (about a quart), and a box of vanilla wafers for a nickel. We would watch the fireman washing their fire engine and pig out. Was that great or what? We thought it was about a mile but it was only about a block. Going forward to Hennaman Ave, me, Pep and Junior would play with my fathers old shot gun. (No shells or bullets.) We would play and pretend we would shoot the rentman when he came. We thought he looked like Mr. Barnaby on the Christmas Show they showed every year on t.v. It was called 'Babes in Toyland' or 'The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers' with Laurel and Hardy. My daughter Sharon is doing all the typing and copying. She's a computer whiz (not really). She has heard some of this through the years but I wanted her and the rest of my family to see some of the Great Depressin Years, befor they were born.

Jim, Sr.

CHRISTMAS 1940

'Now's the Season to be Jolly'. It is now but not then. Christmas Eve about nine o'clock, I told Eddy we better get to bed early because tomorrows Christmas. The next morning everybody was up early. Did I forget to mention we were at a boarding and Foster home. The other boys that were there still had a father and he brought them presents. He was sick a lot and didn't work. She also had about four shipyard workers plus her own family. Anyway, they had christmas caroles playing and opening presents and everybody was showing what they got. 'We got nothing' and I could see the writing on the wall. But Eddy was still a kid and he didn't understand. I took him out on the back porch and told him I would get him something later. About that time one of the men came out and gave me a fifty cent piece and said split it up. It was the best present we could get. I get a little misty eyed when I think about it. But you can't see me. I only remember crying about three times in my life. I've just retired for the third time and my last boss said "you know what your trouble is, you're still living in the past". Well maybe he's right. The past all happened and tomorrow we will never know.

Brother Martin,
Jim, Sr.